



PLAYER DEVELOPMENT AT THE TRAIN TO TRAIN STAGE

(GIRLS AGE 11-15 YEARS, BOYS AGE 12-16 YEARS)

MAIN OBJECTIVE

Build an aerobic base, develop speed and strength towards the end of the stage, and further develop and consolidate sport-specific skills.

The Train to Train stage begins when a child's major growth spurt begins which makes it an important window for the physiological development of players. This is a sensitive period of accelerated adaptation to aerobic, speed and strength development. **WARNING:** Take care that youth are not pushed to over-train or over-compete as this is the stage when many young athletes quit their sport due to burnout or excessive pressure.

GENERAL SPORT DEVELOPMENT



- May start to focus on 2 sports based on desire & sport-specific potential.
- Major focus of training / competition is applying skills, strategies & tactics learned in training.
- 60:40 percent training -to-competition ratio (40 includes competition - specific training and actual competition).

GENERAL FITNESS SKILLS



- Aerobic* - optimal trainability begins with onset of growth spurt.
 - Speed*
 - Strength*
 - Encourage flexibility training to avoid stress.
 - Further develop recovery & regeneration programs.
 - Develop techniques to taper and peak.
- *Key period of development

MENTAL & COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT



- Abstract thinking becomes more firmly established.
- Much emphasis on self - identity with participants eager to perfect skills.
- Deductive reasoning and systematic planning emerges.
- This stage is critical to fully understanding the rules of sport and the consequences of one's actions.

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT



- Tremendous influence on behavior from peer group.
- Tension between adults and adolescents.
- Need opportunity to explore own ideas of self & how they fit in.
- Pressure from coaches / parents to play a certain role can cause confusion.
- Capable of co-operating & accepting some responsibility.

ETHICAL & SOCIAL SKILLS



- Learn to cope with physical & mental challenges of competition.
- Integrating basic mental preparation skills into training.
- Playing fair matters as competition increases.
- Key concepts:
 - Personal best / goal-setting.
 - Continuous Improvement.
 - Reinforce sportsmanship & fair play.

COACHING TIPS

- **Players should get as many touches on the ball as possible** - Better opportunity to develop their skills.
- **Focus on the technical skill application** - Training and games.
- **Don't under value asking OPEN or LEADING questions** - Player feedback will guide the level of instruction.
- **Positive reinforcement** - Give positive feedback at all times.
- **Create a challenging environment** - Time challenges or mini competitions.
- **Use all teaching tools** - Verbal, Visual & Feeling.
- **"Secret Plan" for every exercise or game** - Create excitement and interest.
- **SHOW & GO** - Don't talk for too long. Demonstrate and let players "feel" the exercise.

DESIRED GENERAL OUTCOMES

Youth:

- Understand how to make informed lifestyle and nutrition choices.
- Understand that they need to respect their bodies by not using banned substances.
- Learn the importance of positive self-talk and mental imagery in overcoming anxiety and creating confidence in performance.

Parents understand:

- Their involvement in sport changes as youth are more independent & likely train without them. Their role becomes more advisory & support.
- Players are not pushed to over-train/over-compete or injury and burnout can result.
- Youth might start to focus on 2 sports based on their desire and potential but it's still too early for a high degree of specialisation.